4. "That at page 2 for lines 41-42, the following be substituted, namely:—

'(b) in sub-section (2),—

(i) for the words "fifteen days' wages" the words "one month's wages" shall be substituted; and

(ii) the following *Explanation* shall be inserted at the end, namely:—

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, I beg to move:

5. "That at page 3, line 2, after the words 'fifty thousand rupees' the words 'but not less than twenty months' wages in any case' be inserted."

The questions were put and the motions were negatived.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA): The question is:

"That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4 was added to the Bill.

Clause 5—Insertion of new section 4A.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I beg to move:

6. "That at page 3, line 18, after the words 'gratuity fund' the words 'deposited with an authority of the Government' be inserted."

The question was put and the motion was negatived.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (SHRI H. HANUMANTAPPA): The question is:

"That clause 5 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 5 was added to the Bill.

Clause 6 was added to the Bill.

Clause 7 - Amendment of section 7

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA): There are two amendments by Mr. Narayanasamy. He is not here. Yes, Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I beg to move:

8. "That at page 4, line 16 for the words 'not exceeding' the words 'at double' be substituted."

The question was put and the motion was negatived.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA): The question is:

"That clause 7 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.
Clauses 8 and 9 were added to the Bill.
Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE COCONUT DEVELOPMENT BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1987

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI G. S. DHILLON): Sir, I beg to move:—

"That the Bill further to amend the Coconut Development Board Act, 1979, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this is a very simple amendment. Earlier, we had only the Agriculture Commissioner as a Member under section 4 (4) (b). Now, Sir, we have created a Horticulture Division in the Ministry of Agriculture and as this Horticulture Commissioner deals with coconut, we want to replace the Agriculture Commissioner by the Horticulture Commissioner. This is a very simple amendment.

I, therefore, move "that the bill be accepted."

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Kindly explain why this need arose.

SHRI G. S. DHILLON: I can read out the details if you like.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA (Andhra Pradesh): We would like to know why you have included it under Horticulture.

SHRI G. S. DHILLON: I have just mention earlier that we had no Horticulture Commissioner; the Commissioner of Agriculture used to deal with crops and horticulture. Now we have created a separate Division in the Ministry of *Agriculture under the Commissioner of* Horticulture. So we want to replace the Commissioner of Agriculture who deals with crops only by the Commissioner of Horticulture. Very simple.

The question was proposed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA): Mr. Mohanan.

SHRI K. MOHANAN (Kerala): Sir, I am happy to see that Dhillonji himself is here to pilot this Bill, because even though he is from the northern most part of the country he knows there is a State, Kerala, in the southern most tip of this land. I am not saying that his subordinates are against us, but always they have been sympathetic and so much concerned about the problems of coconut growers and other cash crop growers in Kerala. So I am very much thankful to him.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is not merely Kerala; there are other Southern States also.

SHRI K. MOHANAN: Mainly it is Kerala. Ninety per cent of the coconut is produced by Kerala, everybody knows that. I do not want to go into that.

As the Minister has stated, this Bill is very simple, Sir. But the problem is very serious, because this is just to replace the Agriculture Commissioner from the Coconut Development Board by the Horticulture Commissioner. I do not know how this coconut has come under horticulture. What is the philosophy? I do not know whether you are considering it as a fruit.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): Without entering into the debate it should have been the Coconut Commissioner! Then there would have been no debate.

SHRI K. MOHANAN: With this change, I don't think there would be any basic effect on the functioning of the Coconut Development Board. Sir, 'Kera' means 'coconut'. 'Kerala' means the land

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal) in the Chair]

of coconut'. In Sanskrit it is 'Kerala'. In Malyalam also it is 'Keralam'; that means, the land of coconut.

Coconut cultivation is the backbone of the economy of Kerala, everybody knows that. If I am correct, more than 28 per cent of the revenue of the State is from coconut cultivation. The sad aspect of coconut cultivation in the State now is that its area has been very progressively declining over the past few years, and the production also has fallen due to certain adverse circumstances or factors. About 40 per cent of the total coconut area is affected by root-wilt disease, for which no cure has been so far found out by our scientists. Of course, I do appreciate that now our country is trying to go to the outer space, with rockets and satellites. But, Sir, I am sorry to note that the scientists of our country have failed to find out a solution for this simple disease. The Minister of State has said in the other House when this Bill was discussed that he would advise the coconut growers of the country to cut down the saplings and trees and to destroy them in order to get rid of this brutal disease. With this scientific advice of cutting down the trees, where is the guarantee that the new trees which are being planted will not be affected by this disease? That is why I am mentioning this. It is the advice of the Minister to cultivate them and to destroy them. It

will become a process for the coconut growers in the country to cultivate the trees and to destroy them if they are affected. I never expected such an advice from a Minister who is in-charge of agriculture in this country because more than 70 per cent of the people are still depending on agriculture. Not only from the rootwilt disease, but the growers also suffered crop damage due to the unprecedented drought which we faced in 1983 and also this year. Hundreds and thousands of coconut trees perished due to severe drought. The drought affected not only the coconut trees. As you know, Kerala is famous for cash crops such as pepper, cardamum and all that. All these types of crops and especially the money crops have been destroyed due to severe drought. It was estimated that this year alone the loss was to the tune of Rs. 1000 crores. I am thankful to the Prime Minister who has already declared some 10 crore of rupees as relief to Kerala. But it will not touch the tip of the iceberg. A Central Team has visited Kerala. I think that the reports submitted by the Study or Expert Team is under consideration for the last three weeks. We are waiting for a decision from the Government in this regard. I do hope that the hon. Agriculture Minister will take notice of this and take a decision as early as possible in favour of this piece of land which is lying in the Southern-most part of the country.

Another important factor is the fluctuation in the coconut market. There was a steep decline in the coconut prices during the last two or three years. Coconut is not a seasonal crop. But we are not getting the yield in an even manner throughout the year. The yield will be better for six months. In the next six months, the production will come down. Naturally, the law of demand and supply works here too. When there is more production, naturally the prices will come down. In the other half of the year or in the next six months when the production comes down, then there is little pick-up in the price level. What is being done at that time? With the consent of the Government, in this season the big industrialists of the country are importing coconut oil from outside. Anyhow, now the international market is not very much in favour of importing coconut from other countries. That is why we are surviving. Otherwise, it would have been something unfortunate for us in this regard.

Sir, I have already mentioned that 90 per cent of the milling coconut is produced by Kerala and it is the backbone of the economy of the State itself. And I do not know how this Coconut Development Board is functioning to solve these problems of disease of the coconut trees, flunctuation in the prices, subsidy to the growers and development of the cultivation of coconut. In all these respects, actually this Board is a defunct one. For the last two years, the Board is not at all functioning. It was not reconstituted. And it was a defunct body for the last two years. But even if it is functioning, what about the resources of this Board? They are very meagre. Their power is very limited. Their resources are very meagre. Of course, Sir, there are other Boards like the Rubber Board. My hon. friend, Mr. Jacob knows how the Rubber Board is functioning. You are giving sufficient money to them. You are giving crores and crores of rupees as subsidy to the growers and for the development of this particular cultivation, for planting of rubber. But I am sorry to say, Sir, that there is a very strong lobby of the rubber growers but the coconut growers have no lobby there. So, Sir, taking serious situation into account, I suggest to the hon. Minister that the Coconut Development Board should be reconstituted on per with the Rubber Board and sufficient subsidy should be given to the growers for reclamation, replanting and development. Another problem is marketing. This Coconut Development Board is doing nothing about the marketing of coconut. So, with the help of the State Government and the co-operation of the State Government and by utilising the existing agencies of the State Government in the matter of purchase of coconut and by offering a minimum support price, they should help the coconut growers. Sir, the hon. Minister knows very well the problems of the coconut growers in this country, especially in other States like

[Shri K. Mohanan]

Bihar Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat. The major portion of the produce is being utilised as tender coconut. But as far as the industry is concerned, 90 per cent of the milling copra, that is, the coconut kernel, is being produced by Kerala. Everybody knows these facts, specially the hon. Minister very well knows about them. So, specially the problems are the root disease, the leaf frond disease, the fluctuating market and giving subsidy at a lower interest for reclamation and for replanting. In all these things, if the Government of India is not prepared to give sufficient resources, sufficient funds to the Coconut Development Board, there is no meaning of such a Board at all. Now, I think that the amount that you are giving to or sanctioning to the development board is only for the t.a. and d.a. bills of the Chairman and members of the Board. There is hardly any substantial support given to the growers.

I have already mentioned that the Bill is very simple but the problem is very serious. I do hope that the hon. Minister will take all these points into consideration. With these words, Sir, I support this Bill. Thank you.

SHRI PRABHAKAR RAO KALVALA: (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, this Coconut Development Board Amendment Bill was introduced in this House and the same Bill was amended in 1979 by the then Agricultural Minister, Mr. Surjit Singh Barnala. At that time, the opinion was that the board was consisting of mostly officials and so it was thought that some of the public representatives, i.e., Members of Parliament, should be on the board and so also some of the representatives of the farmers should also be on the board. After that our respected Agricultural Minister introduced this further amendment. This amendment seeks that this board which was handled by agricultural commissioner, should now be handled by the horticultural commissioner. I want to clarify that the Minister after seven or eight years has again brought this Bill into this House. But may I know that right from these 8 years what is the increase in area under the coconut cultivation. Firstly, if the Government is sincere regarding coconut development, first the field has to be selected. Coconut tree will survive in only loomy sandy soils only in Kerala and some parts of Karnataka and some parts of Madras. Now this coconut plantation is existing here. But whereas the same situation is in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh and some other southern parts of India, there are some areas for the cultivation of coconut here also. As far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned 900 to 1200 kilometres of coastal area is there where sandy loomy soils are available. There the plantation could not take place for the last eight years. One thing more under D.R.D.A. and S.C.B.L. corporations they are supplying coconut seedlings to small farmers. They are being procured by private nurseries and these private nurseries are worried of their amounts only. They are not worried of the guarantee about quality and quantity. And they say that they are supplying dwarf variety and high-yielding variety. And after the experience of these plantations the variety is not being guaranteed. There is no yield and even after 8 to 10 years it is not giving any yield and it is going high and high and they say that it is the dwarf variety. I request the Ministry that the Government should take care in supplying coconut seedlings which are high-yielding and dwarf variety which can give good yield in lesser time. At the same time the plantation and trees are affected with so many diseases, variety of diseases and all that. There are so many types of pests and no pesticides can control them. As a result the yield is going down and down. The result is that we could not compete with foreign countries like Philippines and Ceylon. I request the Agriculture Minister first to cover the area with good quality and variety of coconut trees and all that. The coconut is procured from the farmer at not more than Rs. 2.50 a piece and if you purchase coconut oil in the open market, it is not less than Rs. 35 to Rs. 40 per Kg. So, neither the producer nor the consumer is happy. I want to know whether this Coconut Development Board guarantees the procurement of coconut. Then,

there is no guarantee of marketing. It is only the middleman who stands to benefit.

This Coconut Development Board is being attached to the Horticulture Commissioner. But whether it is the Horticulture Commissioner or the Agriculture Commissioner, it does not matter. We are concerned with proper functioning of the Board. If you see the working of the Horticulture Department, you will find people there are only drawing salaries without doing anything. They do not go to the villages.

Looking to the growth in population, I feel, this is one fruit which can be of help in the near future. But its growth is not being encouraged. There is no guarantee of its variety; there is no guarantee of the life of plantation; there is no guarantee of its survival and at the same time there is no guarantee of control over pests and the viral diseases.

Coming to Andhra Pradesh, most of the soil is alluvial or sandy soil. In the Krishna or Godavari basin or coastal area we find thousands of acres of sandy soil. I feel coconut plantation can be taken up in lakhs and lakhs of acres. In Kerala we know about 20,000 acres of land is covered by coconut plantation. In South India there are so many patches of big areas where coconut can survive. So, if you set up this Coconut Board, it should not merely confine itself to the closed rooms. They must go to villages and survey the area. They must approach small farmers. You are investing huge amounts on SCBC Corporation for this plantation but the farmers are not encouraged; they are not given proper plantation facilities; they are not given proper varieties or improved varieties. The result is that private nurseries are making huge profits because a coconut plant can be purchased from them at about Rs. 20|- and the small farmers are not provided proper facilities. There are not even irrigation facilities available. You should see that proper seeds are distributed to the farmers where irrigation is possible, and after a survey is made.

The Board must consist of representatives of the farmers from respective States so that members of the Board know rural India. I am sure most of the official workings in the Board may not be knowing anything about agriculture. What justice can they do to the producers?

Only this morning there was a discussion on the question regarding afforestation and social forestry. In my own State, so much of money is being wasted by the Central and State Government and they say the survival rate is 80 per cent. But that is not so. I feel when you are spending so much money on providing shady trees, on providing eucalyptus trees, it would be better if you spend that money on coconut plants. For every shady tree you are incurring an expenditure of Rs. 50|- The survival rate is not even 20 per cent in the rural areas. I would suggest to the hon. Minister that instead of going in for trees like the eucalyptus, we should go in for coconut, we should go in for such other trees which give edible things. This should be our strategy for the future. This may be taken into account.

Sir, if the Board is sincere, if the Government is sincere, they should come up with constructive proposals. Otherwise, the farmer will lose faith in the technology; he will lose faith in agricultural development. The Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission is under the clutches of the industrialists. (*Time-bell rings*). That is why the farmer is not getting remunerative price. The same problem is faced by the coconut industry also. So many by-products can be obtained from coconut. The Coir Board is there. There is rope-making and other things. These are not being properly encouraged. I would say, merely changing the terminology, merely changing the name of the Commission into the Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission is not going to make much difference. In actual practice, as I said, you should come up with constructive proposals. The Coconut Development Board should go down to the villages. They should take up the challenge. People in the rural areas should be made aware of the technology. Even after forty years of attaining freedom, there is no radical change in agriculture. The same thing is

[Shri Prabhakar Rao Kalvala].

going on. Agriculture has become a sort of debt-trap for the farmer. He has no other alternative and he continues to be a farmer.

Therefore, Sir, I would request the hon. Minister to take steps to save this honest profession which is feeding the nation. Farmer is the pillar of this nation. I do respect the hon. Minister. That is why I would request him to look into this matter seriously and come up with constructive measures for the benefit of the farmers.

With these words, I welcome this Bill and I thank you for the opportunity given to me.

श्री जमदम्बी प्रसाद यादव (बिहार): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, बिल तो निर्दोष है लेकिन असहाय है । कार्यशील होने की जो आवश्यकता है उसका इस विधेयक में कहीं लक्षण प्रगट नहीं होता है । हमारे पूर्ववक्ताओं ने केरल और दक्षिण के कुछ अन्य राज्यों में जहां नारियल की अत्यधिक खेती होती है उसका जिक्र किया । वास्तव में अभी नारियल की खेती, जिससे तेल बनता है, वहीं पर वर्तमान है भी । कई वर्षों से जिस बिमारी का उल्लेख चल रहा है सूखे का, मुझे याद है कि इसी सदन में पूर्व कृषि मंत्री जी ने कहा था कि इसके लिए अलग से पौधा तैयार कर लिया गया है और अब नये ढंग से नारियल के पड़ लगाए जाएंगे । मैं जानना चाहता हुं कि उस नये ढंग के पौधे तयार करने की प्रथा का जो विकास किया गया था उसकी क्या स्थिति है ? क्या सचमुच में वह कुछ यथार्थ रुप ले सका है या सदन में सिर्फ घोषणा करने की चीज थी । मैं इस बारे में माननीय मंत्री जी की जानकारी चाहूंगा ।

दूसरी बात, किसानों के पैदावार के उचित मूल्य की होती है । अन्य कैश क्राप्स में तो कम से कम किसानों को उचित मूल्य मिलता है लेकिन वह कैश क्रप जिसको किसान बहुतायत में पैदा करता है उसकी स्थिति वही हो जाती है जैसे ईख की खेती में, पटसन की खेती में है, और वही स्थिति हमारे नारियल की खेती की है । उचित मूल्य उनको नहीं मिलता है । चाहे पटसन की खती हो, चाहे नारियल की खेती हो, चाहे ईख की खेती हो इनमें यह देखा गया है कि प्रारम्भिक अवस्था में उनको कीमत नहीं दी जाती है । जब इसकी कमी होने लगती है, तब इसको कीमत मिलती है । इसका अर्थ होता है कि जिस किसान को कैपेसिटी है, तो वह तो कीमत ले सकता है, पर जिस किसान की क्षमता नहीं है वह इसका पूरा मूल्य नहीं ले सकता है ।

सरकार हर बार कहती है कि हम किसान को पूरा मूल्य दिलायेंगे, लेकिन जैसा कि हमारे माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा कि जो कीमत तय करने वाला आपका विभाग है, वह विभाग निश्चित रूप से किसी न किसी उद्योगपति के हाथ में खेलता है । कृषि सलाहकार समिति की बैठक में एक बार हमारे कृषि मंत्री जी ने इस एग्रीकल्चरल प्राईस कमीशन के अध्यक्ष को भी बुलाया था और उनको कहा गया था—मैं जनरल बात करता हूं—कीमत तय करते समय वे सांसदों और विधायकों से भी मिल कर बात कर लें और उसी बैठक में बात करते-करते उस अध्यक्ष जी ने कहा कि आपको जितनी बकवास करनी हो, कर लीजिए, चर्चा करनी हो, कर लीजिए, दाम तो मैं तय करूंगा और वास्तव में कृषि मंत्री हों, कृषि विभाग हो या सांसद हों, यह चर्चा कर लें, लेकिन वास्तव में तय वह करते हैं और तय वह उनके हिसाब से करते हैं जो उनकी पाकेट को गर्म करते हैं । थोड़ा सा ध्यान वह जरूर भोकल का कर लेते हैं, शहरों का, लेकिन किसानों का ध्यान नहीं रखते, न किसान उनको कुछ दे सकते हैं, न उनसे मिल पा सकते हैं ।

इसीलिए प्राईस के बारे में मैं जरूर चाहूंगा कि आप जरा इस पर विचार करें ।

मैं एक नई बात आपसे कहना चाहता हूं, वह नई बात है कि क्या हम नारियल का मेडिकल प्लांट या फ्रूट के रूप में व्यवहार कर सकते हैं ? नारियल का पानी अनेक बीमारियों में पीने की सलाह दी जाती है कि इसको पिया जाए और पीने से पेट की अनेक बीमारियों में और बीमारी की अवस्था में लाभ करता है । चेचक जैसी बीमारी में, जिससे दाग पड़ते हैं, मुहासे होते हैं, उस पर इसके पानी को मलने से दाग छूट जाते हैं ।

तो मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या इसके पानी की केमिकली मेडसिनल प्लांट की तरह जांच कराई जाएगी ? इसकी गरी का मेडिकल उपयोग हो सकता है, तो किस रूप में हो सकता है? अगर इसका उस रूप में उपयोग हो, तो मैं समझता हूं कि इसकी कीमत और कुछ न कुछ बढ़ जाएगी ।

एक बात मैं बोर्ड के औचित्य पर आपसे जानना चाहते हूं कि बोर्ड की रचना बोर्ड का अधिकार, बोर्ड की व्यवस्था और बोर्ड के विकास में काम करने की स्थिति एवं धन की व्यवस्था क्या है ? बोर्ड सचमुच में कुछ कर पा सकता है क्या, चूंकि यह विधेयक निश्चित रूप से बोर्ड की ही बात का है ? मैं नहीं समझता कि जगलरी के सिवाए इसमें कुछ है । पहले सहकारिता के निदेशक इसमें काम करते थे, फिर उनको बोर्ड में लिया और फिर उसी की अध्यक्षता में बोर्ड को बना दिया ।

तो मैं समझ सकता हूं कि शब्दों तथा विभाग के नाम की जगलरी के सिवाए इसमें कुछ है क्या ? इसीलिए बोर्ड के कार्य-कलापों के बारे में मैं आपसे जानने की कोशिश करना चाहता हूं । उसी के साथ मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि इस बोर्ड ने सातवीं पंच वर्षीय योजना में विकास के लिए किस-किस राज्य में कौन-कौन सी योजनायें ली हैं ।

जहां तक दक्षिण भारत का सवाल है, मैं समझता हूं कि उन्होंने विकास के कुछ काम किये होंगे, लेकिन आज अगर नारियल की खेती की बात करता हूं, तो मैं बिहार का नाम आपके आगे रखना चाहता हूं कि बिहार के पूर्णिया, कटिहार जिले में आज नारियल की खेती जिस पैमाने पर शुरू हुई है, अगर यह नारियल विकास बोर्ड उसको सहयोग दे, तो मैं समझता हूं कि कुछ ही दिनों में यह केरल या अन्य दक्षिण राज्यों को अच्छे नारियल से उस कमी की पूर्ति कर सकता है ।

क्या विकास बोर्ड का ध्यान इस पर गया है ? क्या नारियल विकास बोर्ड ने कोई विकास योजना बिहार के पूर्णिया क्षेत्र में ली है ? मैं इसलिए कहना चाहता हूं कि बिहार, उड़ीसा, बंगाल का भी जो कोकोनट उत्पादन होता है, वह पेय जल के रूप में ही व्यवहार होता है, उसका व्यावसायिक तेल के रूप में या तेल के रूप में उपयोग नहीं हो पा रहा है ।

इसलिए जब तक विशाल पैमाने पर नारियल विकास बोर्ड या भारत का कृषि विभाग इस काम को अपने हाथ में लेकर इसको उपयोगी बनाने के लिए उसमें नहीं लगता है तब तक मैं नहीं समझता हूं कि यह नारियल की खेती टेंडर कोकोनट खेती से आगे बढ़ करके वास्तव में जो कमी आ रही है उस कमी को पूरा कर सकती है ? हमारे माननीय मित्र कह रहे थे कि भारत सरकार कोकोनट का आयात भी कर लेती है और जब बाजार में आयात का लक्ष्य नहीं मिला तब यहां की बात करती है । वास्तव में, मुझे तो लगता है कृषि मंत्रालय एक तरफ जहां पीठ ठोकता है हरित क्रांति की हालांकि पैदावार भी बढ़ी है, वहीं दूसरी तरफ आज भी लाखों टन अनाज मंगाया जाता है ? यह मिस्ट्री भी भारत के लोग समझ नहीं पाए, उसी तरह से नारियल में भी क्या कुछ मिस्ट्री है ? इतना तो समझ में आता है कि आयात करने में ही आयात करने वाली मशीनरी को कुछ न कुछ आए जिसके कारण वे आयात करते हैं और

4.00 P.M.

[श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव]

आज हिन्दुस्तान में अगर किसी चीज का बाजार गर्म है तो वह है राजनीति का और सरकार पर जो बादल मंडरा रहे हैं वे भी आयात के ही दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण, दुर्लक्ष्य या दुर्नाम के कारण हो रहे हैं? क्या नारियल के आयात में भी कुछ इसकी संभावना है क्या? इसलिए श्रीमन् मैं पुनः आपको बिहार की ओर ले जाना चाहता हूं जहां कि नारियल की खेती बड़े पैमाने पर शुरू हुई है। अभी तक तो पता नहीं था। पहले पूर्णिया के बेड़ लोग शौक से इसे अपने गार्डन में लगाते थे। फिर पता लगा कि और विस्तार से इसकी खेती की जा सकती है। मैं कह सकता हूं कि दक्षिण को जो नारियल की खेती है उसके समकक्ष ही नहीं बल्कि उससे अच्छे नारियल के पेड़ वहां तैयार हो रहे है और फल का दाना भी बड़ा है। लेकिन क्या यह खेती टेंडर कोकोनट के रूप में, पेयजल के रूप में ही चलती रहेगी या इसका आर्थिक निरूपण भी होगा? इसलिए क्या भारतीय कृषि विभाग या जो आपका विकास बोर्ड है उसका भी कुछ कृतित्व इस ओर होगा? इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ इस निर्दोष बिल को समर्थन के साथ, लेकिन एक शब्द जोड़ते हुए कि यह सिर्फ निर्दोष ही नहीं रहे बल्कि यह अपना गुणकारी गुण भी प्रकट करे, असहाय ही न रहे बल्कि किसानों को सहायता देने में समर्थ रूप धारण कर यह मैदान में आये जिससे नारियल के बारे में अपना देश स्वावलंबी ही नहीं हो बल्कि निर्यात करने की स्थिति में भी आ जाए, आपका धन्यवाद करता हूं।

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA (Delhi): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I think this Bill has general support from all sections of the House. I would only like to add that we are looking for greater production of coconut. It is an important part of the economy and it is something that will help a large number of people by providing them with living. I believe this amendment is going to help greater production. I would also like that the Coconut Board should be strengthened further to give more assistance, to provide more information to see that the production goes in a very systematic manner, to see that the larger targets are achieved. I believe this amendment will help this; therefore I support this Bill.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): Sir this is a very simple and innocuous Bill. There is no doubt about it. But it involves an issue which is very important as far as the price of cash crop is concerned. As a matter of fact India perhaps is the third largest country in respect of production of coconut. It is not only the question of Kerala alone. I am told that Lakshadweep, as a matter of fact, depends entirely upon cultivation of coconut. It is not only the question of Kerala and Lakshadweep. It is a question of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar and other places.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव: आप बिहार क्यों छोड़ रहे हैं?

श्री चित्त बसु: हां, बिहार भी और तमिलनाडु भी।

Now the problem is about the development of the cultivation of coconut. As a matter of fact, Sir, you will be surprised to know this. The Planning Commission says that our country will require about 12,000 million nuts by the turn of the century. That is the demand requirement, and this projection has been made by the Planning Commission itself. What is the average production in our country today? It is something like that of 6,000 million nuts. That is, by the turn of the century, according to the projection of the Planning Commission, we have to double the production of coconut. Herein lies the importance, and my purpose of intervening is only to draw the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to that particular aspect.

It is found that there is only a marginal rise in the acreage under the cultivation of coconut. As far as my figure goes, it was 10,55,000 hectares in 1978-79, and it rose only to 10,81,000 hectares by 1980-81. By

this figure it is clear that the rise in the acreage under the cultivation of coconut is very meagre and only marginal. If this is the growth rate and when the reqirement is almost to double what we are producing today, naturally, the importance of the development of the cultivation of coconut becomes very clear to us. This is one aspect.

The Coconut Development Board has been set up to look after the development of coconut and other allied matters. The main problem is the problem of finance. I have found that during the Seventh Five-Year Plan the Government proposed only to allot Rs. 9 crores. Look at the contradiction. The Planning Commission suggests that the production should be doubled, but it allocates only Rs. 9 crores for the development of coconut, to be spent by the Coconut Board! Therefore, the question is, if the Government is serious about the development of coconut, more money is to be allotted for the Coconut Development Board. I would request the hon. Minister to say something on that.

If you want to develop the coconut cultivation, then the question of price, remunerative price for the grower comes. As a matter of fact, the peasants, the growers of coconut in Kerala are up in arms. There was *rail roko*. Even the Karunakaran Ministry had to give a threat of taking certain action against the Government of India. The reason is that the growers of coconut in other parts of the country are not getting remunerative price for their coconut. What is the basic reason for it? The basic reason is that we import coconut and copra. What is the rationale for imprating when you have got your own coconut in this country? Why are you importing coconut oil and copra in an unregulated manner? Therefore, the importance of the problem is to regulate the import of coconut oil and copra. Now the growers suggest that there is a vested interest in import. Because of the vested interests existing in the import of coconut and copra, the growers are suffering most. Now, this is an occasion when the hon. Minister should also say something about the import of coconut. Price stabilisation is the main factor. That is not being ensured because of the import policy. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to suggest whether he would enunciate certain administrative policies for effecting the price stabilisation of coconut. In that respect I do not know whether the Agriculture Prices Commission also goes into the factors which contribute to the cost of production of cultivation of coconuts. There has been no decision as yet taken by the APC to determine or fix the remunerative or support price of the raw coconut. Therefore, my point is if the Bill relates to the development of coconut board, it is to see that the cultivation of coconut is improved. In the way of improvement of the coconut cultivation there are certain constraints as I have mentioned earlier. First there is a dearth of funds for the Development Board; secondly, there is a question of fixing up the remunerative price for the coconut and thirdly, there is a question of import policy. Unless an integrated view is taken, I think the problem now being faced by the coconut growers is not going to be solved; nor will the goal of importing the productivity and enhancing the production be realised. Having regard to these, I think the hon. Minister would respond and see that proper and corrective steps are taken in this respect.

SHRI G. S. DHILLON: I am very grateful to my hon. friends for raising many points. I have heard them with rapt attention. I thought this little and innocent amendment will not provoke so much discussion as Shri Yadav Ji has said:

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : 'निर्दोष होते हुए भी दोष लगते हैं।
दोष तो उसका सहायक बना है।'

SHRI G. S. DHILLON: I would like to reply to Shri Mohanan about the wilt disease. We are very much concerned about it. I personally went to Kerala, parts of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. This wilt disease so far has proved to be very obstinate. We have not yet been able to make much headway except that the disease-striken plants are advised to be uprooted. This is what Mr. Mohanan asked: Is uprooting very essential or it can be treated or otherwise dealt with? Instead of treatment, our main effort was to prevent its spreading to Karnataka also and since many months we have been trying to do that. There are certain types of diseases where you find that treatment is not possible. I am myself having a peaches garden and fungus disease has invaded The only treatment that was suggested was to uproot the plants and we had to do it. The treatment which they have suggested was to remove them from the area of infection to save other trees. We have accepted the advice of the experts. The hon. Member has also mentioned about the drought conditions. Of course, I keep on hearing this not only from Kerala but many other States. It is not only crops which are affected by drought conditions but also many orchards. We have deputed a team to Kerala and they have come back and they have given their report and their report is being examined by a high level committee. In the meanwhile, as hon. Member, Mr Mohanan, has himself pointed out, the Prime Minister was good enough to announce Rs. 10 crores as instant relief. My view is that we may be able to supplement that amount much more. This high level committee consists of representatives from my Ministry, Finance Ministry, planning and other Ministries and as soon as they come out with a report we will take action. The hon. Member also wanted that the report should be expedited and I promised him that we will expedite. I have already spoken to the concerned authorities to expedite the report. I hope it will come back very soon. Then I may be able to tell you personally about it.

Regarding marketing policy and other problems we have held recently a seminar on marketing and processing. We have gained a lot from the deliberations of this seminar. I think hon. Members, Mr. Jagdambi Prasad Yadav and Mr. Chitta Basu spoke about coconut oil price stability. I have heard their views a number of times in this House and spoken on it as to what are the factors guiding the Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission. But coconut question is entirely different. I had been to Kerala last year and they also raised this question and when the new chief Minister and his colleagues came they have also raised this question. Therefore, the only possible solution is if they do not come within the purview of the Agricultural Cost and Prices Commission there is the other alternative of State's price intervention and State and Centre share together in stabilising the prices. This was resorted to by Kerala and some other States, not only with regard to coconut but also in other crops like potatoes etc.

Honourable Member, Shri Prabhakar Rao Kalvala wanted to know the area added. I have just got the figures. Thirteen thousand hectares was the additional area we were able to add only 3 lakh coconut trees were additionally available in one State, Orissa. Shri Jagdambi Prasadji raised the question that some time back my predecessor mentioned that they were going to have many more plants; what steps were being taken in this respect. I have got this information that besides the seeds and seedlings programme and besides the other process of genetic multiplication, the Board established eight regional nurseries and strengthened 53 departmental nurseries procured and supplied 34 lakh seed-nuts and also about 1.5 lakh hybrid seedlings annually; established 540 hectares of hybrid seed garden. I may inform Mohananji that we have not given up our hope for treatment of disease-victim plants. A very

intensive research is being carried on by the Central Plantation Crop Research Institute. I do not know how much headway they have made but I am told they are very seriously busy in that and the results might come now. Now, when they advise removal of plants, the Coconut Board has already given subsidy for removal of 259 lakh root diseased coconut plants. When I talk of coconut, a point was raised, why no other States besides Kerala. I do agree Kerala is the biggest and the highest coconut growing area. There are others also. Shri Jagdambi Prasadji and other Members were asking why not Bihar. Bihar is very much on the list of coconut growing areas. We have Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Andamans and Nicobar, Bihar, Goa, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Orissa, Pondicherry, Tripura, West Bengal and two or three more States. As you know, we came for the abolition of coconut cess and there was a general debate on the abolition of the cess and then the Government came out basing its decision on the observations made by the then Finance Minister last year that the abolition of Cess Fund would be replaced by Budgetary provisions. So they have done it this time, they have provided for funds in the Seventh Plan to the extent of Rs. 550 lakhs and I find they have now managed to go up to 900 lakhs. So, on this resources matter, we are much better off than what we were earlier. During the Sixth Plan, we had one crore of rupees from the Plan and we had an income of Rs. 339.76 lakhs through the Cess Fund. A total amount of Rs. 580 lakhs has been allocated during the Seventh Plan. Besides, a sum of Rs. 350 lakhs is estimated to be available as compensatory grants from the Plan budget in view of the loss of revenue due to the abolition of the cess. Thus, a total of Rs. 930 lakhs is likely to be available during the Seventh Plan. So, after the abolition of the cess, we are not bad of but we are much better off in the case of our resources.

Honourable Members raised some other points also. One point I really appreciate and I do not rebut. As Jagdambi Prasad Yadavji told, in the case of price fixation by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, it is all right if he is a big grower and the production is higher. But what about the farmer who is a small grower and who has hardly enough for his own consumption and nothing to spare for the market. For such people we have to be very cautious, extra cautious. I did not know about the language used by the Chairman of the Commission and I did not know that such a thing took place. I had no idea. But it may be during the time of some of my predecessors and I do not remember it nor have I been told about it. But neither the old Chairman is there nor any of my predecessor here and I think it is the duty of a Chairman or the Members of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices to give an intensive and thorough background of the process of determination of prices to the Members. After all, it is we who have to deal with the people and satisfy them and it is only on our knowledge of their problems that we base our future policy. But I am really sorry that this thing happened.

Now, Sir, Jagdambi Prasad Yadavji said that we should examine the medicinal values of coconut. Well, we can enquire about it and we can call for expert opinion on that. But otherwise too, even when it is not tested, I can say that it is very much like a medicine and when we take its water and when we take the tender coconut, at least we feel very much refreshed. Even that famous book is there and I have forgotten its name. It tells about the people who were stranded on an island and who took it. It was a textbook in our schools. It is full of the qualities of coconut and the benefits of coconut consumption. I wish I could lay hands on that old book and if I could lay my hands on that old book I will give it to you and you will just enjoy reading about the benefits of coconut consumption.

Sir, I did not have any idea about all these things because I thought that this was a very simple amendment and that my knowledge of figures and statistics would not be tested. In future I shall be

[Shri G. S. Dhillon]

careful and bring all statistical figures along with me.

Now, the following programmes are under implementation by the Board at present: Production of quality coconut seedlings, including TxD hybrids; establishment of hybrid seed gardens for the production of DxT hybrids, establishment of Demonstration-cum-Seed Production farms for coconut; expanision of area under coconut; establishment of coconut plantation on canal embankments; establishment of coconut plantation in khas lands in Tripura; financial assistance to coconut growers for the removal of rootwilt affected palms; promotion of biological control of coconut pests; promotion of irrigation facilities; promotion of primary processing and marketing activities; establishment of a coconut technology development centre.

The basic objectives of the above-mentioned programmes are: Expansion of area under coconut; production and distribution of quality and hybrid planting material by establishing nurseries, hybrid seed farms and community/cooperative nurseries; rehabilitation and rejuvenation of diseased and unproductive coconut palms; development of irrigation facilities; promotion of primary processing and marketing activities; and promoting technological research on product diversification.

Mr. Chitta Basu asked about the import of coconut oil. In the last session when I spoke about it, I expressed the idea that not in the very distant future we will be to stop its import. I still hold the same view that in a very short time we will be able to manage it. But, unfortunately, oilseeds or edible oils which we get from non-coconut or mustard or rape-seed, etc. are not linked with plantation oil, plantation crops. It is not linked with that. But if we consider the import of edible oils we may be de-linked from coconut oil because they are not being treated at par in that field. That is what reply I can say at present.

I thank you very much, Sir, and the Members for the valuable opinions they have expressed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Coconut Development Board Act, 1979, be taken into consideration.".

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI G. S. DHILLON: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1987

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, with your permission, I would like to say a few words while moving the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 1987 for the consideration of the House.

The Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 1987 seeks to revise the provisions of Part VI of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

This part prescribes *inter-alia* the manning scales for Indian ships and fishing